

NOTICE OF INDEPENDENT REVIEW DECISION

May 21, 2003

RE: MDR Tracking #: M2-03-0663-01-SS
IRO Certificate #: 4326

The ___ has been certified by the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI) as an independent review organization (IRO). The Texas Workers' Compensation Commission (TWCC) has assigned the above referenced case to ___ for independent review in accordance with TWCC Rule §133.308 which allows for medical dispute resolution by an IRO.

___ has performed an independent review of the proposed care to determine if the adverse determination was appropriate. In performing this review, relevant medical records, any documents utilized by the parties referenced above in making the adverse determination, and any documentation and written information submitted in support of the appeal was reviewed.

The independent review was performed by a ___ physician reviewer who is board certified in neurosurgery which is the same specialty as the treating physician. The ___ physician reviewer has signed a certification statement stating that no known conflicts of interest exist between him or her and any of the treating physicians or providers or any of the physicians or providers who reviewed the case for a determination prior to the referral to ___ for independent review. In addition, the reviewer has certified that the review was performed without bias for or against any party to this case.

Clinical History

This patient sustained an injury to his lower back ___ while working in a meat department and slipped on some blood. He had surgery on 04/16/02 which consisted of left L5-S1 laminectomy, discectomy, and foraminotomy bilaterally. He also had a fusion at L5-S1 with bone graft and instrumentation. Post-operatively he continued to report pain and numbness in the lower back, thigh, and legs. Electromyography (EMG) and Nerve Velocity Conduction (NCV) studies from 10/25/02 revealed left S1 and right L5 radiculopathies. Also noted was a mild sensory peripheral neuropathy.

Requested Service(s)

Re-exploration of L5-S1 and wide decompression of L4-L5 with fusion and pain pump

Decision

It is determined that the re-exploration of L5-S1 and wide decompression of L4-L5 with fusion and pain pump is not medically necessary to treat this patient's condition.

Rationale/Basis for Decision

The medical record documentation indicates that the patient is experiencing a possible extradural defect at L5-S1; however, the CT Scan does not confirm the presence of non-union. There is insufficient rationale for performing a decompression at L4-5 or for pain pump placement at the same procedure. It is not customary practice to perform both procedures at the same time and at one year, the patient will most likely continue to heal. Therefore, the re-exploration of L5-S1 and wide decompression of L4-L5 with fusion and pain pump is not medically necessary.

This decision by the IRO is deemed to be a TWCC decision and order.

YOUR RIGHT TO REQUEST A HEARING

Either party to this medical dispute may disagree with all or part of the decision and has a right to request a hearing.

If disputing a spinal surgery prospective decision a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **10** (10) days of your receipt of this decision (20 Tex. Admin. Code 142.5 (c)).

If disputing other prospective medical necessity (preauthorization) decisions a request for a hearing must be in writing and it must be received by the TWCC Chief Clerk of Proceedings within **20** (twenty) days of your receipt of this decision (28 Tex. Admin Code 148.3).

This Decision is deemed received by you 5 (five) days after it was mailed (28 Tex. Admin Code 102.4(h) or 102.5(d)). A request for hearing should be sent to: Chief Clerk of Proceedings, Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, P.O. Box 40669, Austin, Texas, 78704-0012. **A copy of this decision should be attached to the request.**

The party appealing the decision shall deliver a copy of its written request for a hearing to all other parties involved in the dispute (Commission Rule 133.308 (t)(2)).

Sincerely,

In accordance with Commission Rule 102.4 (h), I hereby verify that a copy of this Independent Review Organization (IRO) Decision was sent to the carrier, the requestor and claimant via facsimile or U.S. Postal Service from the office of the IRO on this 21 st day of May 2003.
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